A

METHOD

OF

GOVERNMENT

FOR SUCH

Publick Working

ALMS-HOUSES

As may be Erected in every County for bringing all idle hands to Industry.

AS

The best known Expedient for reftoring and advancing the Woollen Manufacture.

HUMBLY

Offered to the KINGS most Excellent MAJESTY, and both Houses of PARLIAMENT.

By R. *Haines*.

With Allowance.

LONDON,

A Method of Government for Publick Working Alms-houses, &c.

THE Scope or End aimed at, and promised by my former Proposals, is, That all the Wool of *England*, and what *Scotland* and *Ireland* have to spare, may be Manufactured in *England*, as fast as it grows and arises, on such Terms as that all the Cloth we have to spare, being exported, may find quick Markets as fast as 'tis made.

The Expedients or means to Effect All this, are,

First in General, To bring all poor People and idle hands to Industry.

Secondly, in particular, as the only effectual Way or Method, to do this to the best advantage it is proposed,

That two or three, or more, Publick Work-houses be Erected in every County, where all such poor people and idle hands may under good Governments be constantly employed with the best advantage.

Which having been perused and considered by several Publick Spirited Persons, known Promoters of the Nations wealth and safety, they have generally very much approved and encouraged the said Expedient, as most certain, feasible, and effectual to accomplish the great and good ends aforesaid; If I could but propose such a Method of Government in these Work-houses as the Nation may be secured of these four things, *viz.* The Country from being cheated of their Money raised for erecting and furnishing such Houses; the Poor from being abused, and Persons kept from being Officers and bearing Rule in them, and Justice from being wrested so as not to redress Grievances and punish Offenders.

Wherefore (with all submission to better Judgments) I humbly offer such a Method of Government, as far as concerns the preservation of the Stock raised, and prevention of Frauds and Corruptions in Officers, as will, I conceive, remove all Apprehensions of any the before mentioned mischiefs, that so all judicious persons may be entirely satisfied: As thus,

Sir

Since all Parishes are to contribute to this Work, and every Parishioner is concerned in the Charge, and may reap Benefit by it, if honestly managed, Therefore, because it cannot be imagined that any people will cheat or injure themselves, let each person in every Parish be concerned in or about the Government or Inspection thereof, as follows.

1. That it be Enacted, that all contributing Parishioners, or the greatest part of them, meet Quarterly in their own Parish, and elect one, or more, as their Overseer or Delegates for this Inspection; And so every Parish to chuse and send their Overseers every Quarter of the Year to inspect the State of that house to which they belong. Each Parish neglecting to chuse, to forfeit 5*l.* to the Treasury of the said Hospital. Each Overseer to be allowed 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day by his Parish for the time he is out on this Affair on Horseback; and 1*s.* 6*d.* being out on Foot, provided that none continue out above 6 or 7 days at one time. Or if this seem too burdensome, two, or three, or more, small Parishes may joyn to this purpose as one.

2. That these Overseers, being Assembled, may have full Power to elect Governours, prescribe Rules and Orders, chuse Trustees, appoint Officers, enquire into the Welfare of their respective Poor there, hear and redress their Grievances, see that they be not abused or discouraged, reform all disorders, call each Officer or Trustee to an account, turn them out, and elect new ones as often as they think necessary, *&c.* To which purpose they may subdivide themselves into several Companies, and dispatch much business in little time.

3. That all men in this Assembly may be of equal Authority, and no one person over-rule the rest, who shall likewise before they are admitted, oblige themselves by Oath, or solemn Promise made before a Magistrate, to do those things that are just and honest, to suffer no wrongs or injuries to pass uncorrected, to do nothing for favour or prejudice, but to perform all that lies in his power for the safety and publick good of the Stock and House, and to give a just and true account at his return when called thereunto.

4. That no known rude or disorderly Person shall be permit-

ted to have any Office there, but that for the encouragement of such as are sent to the House to earn their Living, all inferior Offices or Places of Preferment may be conferred on such of the House as most deserve it, if capable.

5. That if it be known any Person or Persons, directly or indirectly, hath given or taken any Bribe or Fee, or offered so to do, in order to obtain or confer any Office or Trust, or do improve his Interest to promote or continue any dishoneſt scandalous person in Office, then every such Person shall thenceforth for ever be incapable of having or holding any Office in the said Work-houses, or giving his Voice concerning the same in any meeting of the Parish or Overseers.

6. That the Assembly of Overseers, with the Assistance of a Magistrate, have power to injoyn all Officers and Trustees of the house, either by Oath or solemn Promise, that they shall act according to such Rules and Orders as shall be agreed on in the said Assembly; that they shall not conceal any ill Practises in any but discover them to the next Quarterly Assembly: That they shall every Quarter give a fair and just Account to that Assembly of all Moneys by them received or disbursed; what Goods they buy or sell, and the quantity and prizes, and what Goods or Money they have in their Custody; And that any one breaking such their Oath or solemn Promise shall be punisht as in the Case of Perjury; and besides, the Offender to make satisfaction, for what he hath detained, imbeziled, or defrauded, to the house, or those that intrusted him.

7. That the Overseers neglecting at the time appointed to use their utmost endeavour to take a true and just account of all persons intrusted, or failing to deliver a true account thereof to their respective Parishes, shall forfeit five pound a-piece, to be paid to the Treasury of the Hospital.

8. That for the building and first stocking such Work-houses, every Parish, or Parishes united, shall (till the same are finisht and Government settled) send their Overseers every Fortnight, or Month, who shall carry the proportion of money payable thereunto by such Parishes respectively. And that all Expenditors & Trustees imployed for car-

rying on the work, ſhall be choſen by ſuch Overſeers, and be accountable to them till the houſe be finiſht and ſettled.

9. That if any difference ariſe between the Overſeers of the Pariſhes, and the Truſtees of the Houſe, it ſhall be refered to a meeting of the reſpective Pariſhes, concern'd in ſuch Workhouſe; And in caſe the like difference ariſe between the Pariſhioners and their Overſeers, the ſame be referr'd to the next quarter Seſſions, or if it require ſpeed, then to two Juſtices, one to be choſen by the Pariſh, the other by the Overſeers; Provided none ſhall have power to hinder the Pariſh or Pariſhes from chuſing ſuch Overſeers as they ſhall think moſt fit to be truſted; or turning out ſuch as they find diſhoneſt.

10. That every Pariſh, and Pariſhes united, do bring a fair account of what Moneys are Collected for the preſent year, and how diſpoſed of, what remains in hand, and what poor they relieve at home, and in the Hoſpital, to the Juſtices at their Eaſter ſitting, after the manner now practiſed.

11. That the Pariſhes united ſhall be equally Taxt at a pound-rate for the relief of their poor, and that their Taxes and accounts be confirm'd by the Juſtices, and that the Juſtices may in join the Pariſhes to contribute what is fit, when otherwiſe they refuſe, and that any poor Inhabitant when abuſed, and cannot be Redreſs'd, may make his caſe known to the Juſtice, when the Governors or Overſeers ſhall refuſe to do their Office.

This Method of Government or Inſpection I humbly offer as moſt ſafe, becauſe from head to foot the Intereſt of one Member hath its dependance on the other.

1. 'Tis the Intereſt of each Pariſh to Elect honeſt Overſeers,
2. 'Tis the Intereſt of theſe Overſeers to Act righteous things, and Elect honeſt Truſtees, not only becauſe, if they betray their Truſt, they are in danger of puniſhment and diſhonour, but alſo, becauſe their own private Intereſt lies at ſtake in the Common intereſt of their Pariſhes.
3. 'Tis the Intereſt of the Officers & Truſtees, whether Honeſt men or Knaves, to do honeſtly, becauſe then they may continue in their places of reaſonable profit, But if they do otherwiſe under ſo many Eyes, and ſuch frequent inſpecti-

ons.

ons, they cannot hope to conceal their misdemeanors, and then must be severely corrected, and pay dearly for it.

Thus much for the Form of Government, as to the Governors; I shall now add a few words concerning the Persons to be Governed; The rather for that our design is abusively Represented, as if we intended these houses to be places of Slavery, and to keep people *per* force there all their Lives, whereas we propose only this.

1. That the Children of all poor people, who are Chargeable to the Parish, be without abuse imployed in these Houses at six years old and upwards, and all Impotent people who are capable of imployment, and do not Earn their livings at home, having no Children under the Age of six years to be maintained.
2. That the Men-children brought up in these Houses have their Liberty to go to Trades, or Husbandry, when they come to the age of 18. years. And the Maiden-Children liberty at the same age to learn Housewifry.
3. That all Beggars, Vagrants *&c.* who have no habitation, nor will earn their Livings in any lawful Imployment, be placed there.
4. That all dangerous persons, Criminals, *&c.* Whom the law condemns to be hang'd, *&c.* (Except in the Case of Murther and Treason) especially such as are guilty of *Perjury* & *Forgery*, may be confined to these Houses during Life, or for a certain Term of years, to serve the publick, being able by their Labour to maintain as many more as themselves.
5. That all Debtors in prison, not able to pay their Debts, or maintain themselves (whereof many hundreds there are ready to starve) may remove themselves to this Hospital, where they may live Comfortably and be Instruments for publick good.

These are the persons that may compose & fill up these Houses. As for the Officers way of providing their Diet, Cloaths, and other circumstances, we need not here particularize, *Christs Hospital*, or the like Foundation, may afford a good President for us to imitate.

As for that Common Objection and Discouragement from the unhappy miscarriage of *Clarkenwell* Work-house, and the

like, which to prevent the moſt happy Reformation and Weal of our Nation, remains a Gazing-ſtock to diſcourage all publick Spirits, as the Devil and ſelf-intereſted people would have it, The ſame ought to be no plea or obſtruction to what we propoſe. For,

1. That which rendred that and other Houſes unſucceſsful, was the ill-government thereof, but ſuch regular method of Government as we have offered, at leaſt with ſome amendments, will prevent all ſuch inconveniencies.

2. As for that Houſe, 'tis nothing ſtrange that it did miſcarry, rather it would have been ſtrange if it had not; ſince the perſons governing ſuch Houſes ought to be inferior to thoſe by whom they are intruſted, that the latter may ſpeedily bring them to account, and if they find any one diſhoneſt, correct and turn him out of doors; whereas the Governors of *Clerkenwell*-houſe were great men, and authorized to raiſe money at pleaſure, not to be corrected, but by Act of Parliament, *&c.* So that their quality, and buſineſs, or want of honeſty, hindred them from uſing that inſpection over inferior Officers as was neceſſary, and when money came into their hands, and was diverted who could force them to an account?

3. If this be a precedent of *ill-ſucceſs*, and only for the reaſon aforeſaid, we can ſhew you many precedents in *Holland*, *&c.* of ſuch Work-houſes erected & managed with *good-ſucceſs*; nay there is ſcarce any thing contributes more to the wealth and ſtrength of that Nation, than their prudence and induſtry in this reſpect; but there they are managed not by Grandees, as *Clerkenwell* was to be, but by honeſt laborious men, who if they fail in their duty are forthwith ſeverely corrected. A perſon intruſted in a Spin-houſe in *Amſterdam*, was publickly whipt and turn'd out of doors for being partial, *viz.* becauſe by his connivance a young woman, who was ſent thither to work for her living, made her eſcape. Another Officer was whipt and committed to the Raſp-houſe, for diminiſhing what was allowed for the comfortable maintenance of the Poor. At *Leiden* I ſaw a fellow moſt ſeverely whipt upon a Scaffold, erected for that very purpoſe before the Spin-houſe in view of many

thousands, and after committed to the Rasp-house, for that he under pretence of being zealous to serve the States, inricht himself by abusing and oppressing the Poor. 'Twas for want of such strict Government *Clarkenwell*, *&c.* came to naught.

4. If because that House, meerly for want of right method, and persons of fit qualifications to govern it, miscarried, therefore no such Houses must be made use of; may not our Merchants as well conclude, that because some Ships, for want of an honest fit Master or skilful Pilot, have been cast away, therefore tho there be men enough whose qualifications and integrity are sufficient, yet they will never venture to send forth any more Ships; If you say the case is different, for tho the Houses have failed, yet we know most of our Ships return safe, then I may return you the same answer; In *Holland* none of these Houses fail, therefore if we take right method of government, our Houses will not fail so often as our Ships, and will become as profitable to the Kingdom, for if the Houses prosper, to be sure our Shipping will increase, therefore whoever is an enemy to these Houses, is as great an enemy to the encrease of our Ships and Seamen, and consequently an enemy to the true, Wealth, Safety and Interest of the English Nation.

At least since this expedient is no new Project, but dayly practised with extraordinary success and advantage by our Neighbors; 'Tis humbly hoped that the same shall not be condemned or rejected by any, **before they have first found out, and demonstrated some more certain, effectual and feasible expedients to accomplish the work in hand, and by the Proposer humbly offered,** *viz.* To convert all the Wool of *England*, and what *Scotland* and *Ireland* have to spare, into Cloth, on such terms as to vend the Cloth as fast as 'tis made, whereby 30 or 40 hundred thousand pounds, *per annum*, may be gain'd to the Nation, and all poor people bred up to such an habit of industry, that for the future a Beggar may not be seen in the Kingdom; but neither they nor their childrens children shall ever want a lawful Imploy-